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S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 03 ASUNCION 000405

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FOR DS/IP/ITA, DS/IP/WHA, POSTS FOR RSO

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TAGS: [PTER](#) [ASEC](#)

SUBJECT: ASUNCION - SETL RESPONSE

REF: STATE 23078

Classified By: TED R. CARPENTER, RSO: REASON 1.4 (C)(D)(G)

POLITICAL VIOLENCE

11. (U) DEMONSTRATIONS

A: (SBU) Are there any ethnic or religious communities in country capable of carrying out significant anti-American demonstrations? Yes. Ethnic groups with foreign influences, i.e. Lebanese Hizbollah, Palestinian radical groups. That said, there has not been a history of protests by these groups.

1B. (SBU) Have there been any anti-American demonstrations in the country within the last 12 months? Yes. On August 13, at approximately 1915 hours, a group of approximately 50 demonstrators approached the Embassy to protest U.S. policy in Venezuela. The protesters consisted mainly of leftist university students and members of a campesino organization (MCNOC). The leader of the group was an individual named LUIS ((AGUAYO)). The protesters stated that they would hold the USG responsible for any attack or incident against President Hugo Chavez during the "referendum" to be held August 15 in Venezuela. They also shouted that the Ambassador should leave Paraguay.

1C. (SBU) Have demonstrations taken place near or in front of U.S. diplomatic facilities?
Yes. See above.

1D. (SBU) What is the average size of an anti-American demonstrations? 50.

1E. (SBU) Are demonstrations usually triggered by U.S. foreign policy initiatives, military actions, or by domestic issues? U.S. foreign policy initiatives.

1F. (SBU) Are demonstrations generally violent or peaceful?
Peaceful.

1G. (SBU) If violent, have any demonstrations resulted in damage to USG property or injuries to USG employees? No.

1H. (SBU) If violent, have any demonstrators ever penetrated our perimeter security line?
No.

1I. (SBU) Have there been any anti-government demonstrations in the country within the last 12 months? Yes. Demonstrations are common in Paraguay. In March 2004, the Cooperatives' Union and the mechanized farmers, led by the Agricultural Coordination of Paraguay (CAP), led 5,000 protesters and a fleet of more than 500 vehicles on a march through downtown Asuncion to denounce the GOP's proposed tax hikes. On June 4, over 15,000 students marched through downtown Asuncion to the Congressional building to call for new measures to combat violence against young Paraguayans. The march was a response to two specific incidents, the first was a murder of an 18-year old high school student, targeted by two muggers for his cell phone, and the other was an 11-year old girl in a small town outside Asuncion who was raped and murdered by a man in his early twenties. In August 2004, several weeks of protests were carried out by campesino groups protesting the GOP's land policy. They blocked roads, occupied properties, and marched on Government ministries and the Congress.

1J. (SBU) Have demonstrations taken place near or in front of U.S. diplomatic facilities? Yes, within a mile of the U.S. Embassy.

1K. (SBU) What is the average size of an anti-government demonstration? Up to several thousand participants.

1L. (SBU) Are these demonstrations generally violent or peaceful? Peaceful but with potential for violence. Violent confrontations are usually limited to protesters clashing with police.

1M. (SBU) If violent, have any demonstrations resulted in damage to USG property? No.

12. (U) MACRO CONFLICT CONDITIONS

1A. (SBU) Is the host country engaged in an interstate or intrastate conflict? (This may include battles between organized and violent drug cartels). Drug cartels/organizations have engaged in violent conflict in Paraguay. Additionally, there are active campesino movements tied to the landless movement (MST) in Brazil which conduct regular land invasions.

1B. (SBU) If an intrastate conflict, is it an insurgency that is limited to a specific region or a country wide civil war? Drug trafficking violence is predominantly limited to regions bordering Brazil and Argentina.

1C. (SBU) If limited to a specific region, are any U.S. diplomatic facilities located in this region? No.

1D. (SBU) Have any of the factions involved in these intrastate conflicts signaled or demonstrated an anti-American orientation? No.

13. (U) HOST COUNTRY CAPABILITIES

1A. (SBU) Are law enforcement agencies professional and well trained? In general, the National Police are poorly trained, badly equipped and lack professionalism.

1B. (SBU) Have they been trained by U.S. agencies? Some specialized units have been trained by U.S. agencies. DS/ATA courses have been provided in Crisis Management, VIP Protection, etc.

1C. (SBU) Are law enforcement agencies confronted with serious widespread corruption inside their agencies? Yes.

1D. (SBU) Are the intelligence services professional and capable of deterring terrorist actions? Paraguay does not have national level intelligence service. Post receives excellent cooperation from the anti-terrorist unit of the Paraguayan National Police.

1E. (SBU) Have the intelligence services been cooperative with U.S. Embassy request for information and support? Yes. It has convicted and sentenced three individuals. The Paraguayan government has been very responsive to drug and counterterrorism efforts.

1F. (SBU) Have host country security services scored any major anti-terrorism successes? Yes. It has convicted and sentenced three individuals implicated in terrorism financing to prison on charges of tax evasion.

1G. (SBU) Has host country been responsive (re: timeliness and allocation of resources) to Embassy requests for protective security? Yes.

1H. (SBU) How does the Embassy assess the overall security at major airports in the country (Excellent, very good, good/average, poor)? Poor.

1I. (SBU) How effective are customs and immigration control agencies? Ineffective.

1J. (SBU) How effective are border patrol forces? Ineffective.

----- INDIGENOUS TERRORISM -----

14. (U) ANTI-AMERICAN TERRORIST GROUPS

1A. (SBU) Are there indigenous anti-American terrorist groups in country? No

B - H. (U) Not applicable.

15. (U) OTHER INDIGENOUS TERRORIST GROUPS

1A. (SBU) Are there other indigenous terrorist groups (not anti-American) in country? No.

B-E. (U) Not applicable.

----- TRANSNATIONAL TERRORISM -----

16. (U) TRANSNATIONAL TERRORIST INDICATORS

1A. (S/NF) Are there any foreign terrorist groups that have a presence in country? Yes. Lebanese Hizballah, Hamas, AMAL, Al-Gama'at and the FARC.

1B. (S/NF) How does the EAC assess this presence? Is it an

operation cell? Financial cell? Support Cell? Propaganda cell? In the case of Islamic Radical Groups, the EAC assesses the presence as financial support and propaganda cells. FARC connection to a high profile kidnapping in Paraguay was only recently uncovered. It appears at the very least the FARC provided training to Paraguayan leftist party (Patria Libre) that carried out the kidnapping.

1C. (S/NF) Is the host country sympathetic to these groups? No.

1D. (S/NF) Are there suspect non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in the country that have a relationship with any of these groups? It is not clear the relationship that the FARC may have to campesino groups such as FNC or MCNOC, and to what extent the FARC has assumed a role in recent peasant demonstrations and land invasions.

1E. (S/NF) Are there any ethnic or religious communities in country that are sympathetic to these groups? Yes.

1F. (S/NF) How does the EAC assess the level, intent, and scope of hostile intelligence services in country relative to potential anti-American terrorist acts? Low. Iran has diplomatic presence in Brasilia with officials making occasional trips to the tri-border region.

1G. (S/NF) How does the EAC assess the availability of weapons and explosives in country or from nearby countries for hostile terrorist elements? Readily available.

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